

World's Greatest Short Stories

No. VII.

THE STORY OF RICHARD DOUBLEDICK

By CHARLES DICKENS



CHARLES DICKENS

Twenty-four famous authors were asked recently to name the best short story in the English language. Mary Stewart Cutting named "The Story of Richard Doubledick" by Charles Dickens, as her selection for this high honor in the world of fiction.



MARY STEWART CUTTING

PART I.

IN the year 1799 a relative of mine came limping down on foot to this town of Chatham. My relative came to Chatham to enlist in a cavalry regiment if not to take King George's shilling from any corporal or sergeant who would put a bunch of ribbons in his hat. His object was to get shot, but he thought he might as well ride to his death as be at the trouble of walking.

My relative's Christian name was Richard, but he was better known as Dick. He dropped his own surname on the road down and took up that of Doubledick. He was passed as Richard Doubledick, age twenty-two, height five foot ten, native place Exmouth, which he had never been near in his life. There was no cavalry in Chatham when he limped over the bridge with half a shoe to his dusty feet, so he enlisted into a regiment of the line and was glad to get drunk and forget all about it.

You are to know that this relative of mine had gone wrong and run wild. His heart was in the right place, but it was sealed up. He had been betrothed to a good and beautiful girl whom he had loved better than she—or perhaps even he believed, but in an evil hour he had given her cause to say to him solemnly: "Richard, I will never marry another man. I will live single for your sake, but Mary Marshall's lips"—her name was Mary Marshall—"never uttered another word to you on earth! Go, Richard! Heaven forgive you!" This finished him. This brought him down to Chatham. This made him Private Richard Doubledick, with a determination to be shot.

There was not a more dissipated and reckless soldier in Chatham barracks in the year 1799 than Private Richard Doubledick. He associated with the dregs of every regiment, he was as seldom sober as he could be and was constantly under punishment. It became clear to the whole barracks that Private Richard Doubledick would very soon be flogged.

Now the captain of Richard Doubledick's company was a young gentleman not above five years his senior, whose eyes had an expression in them which affected Private Richard Doubledick in a very remarkable way. They were bright, handsome, dark eyes—what are called laughing eyes generally, and when serious, rather steady than serious—but they were the only ones now left in his regimented world that Private Richard Doubledick could not stand. Unhappily by evil report and punishment, defiant of everything else and everybody else, he had but to know that those eyes looked at him for a moment, and he felt ashamed. He could not so much as salute Captain Taunton in the street like any other officer. He was reproached and confused, troubled by the mere possibility of the captain's looking at him. In his worst moments he would rather turn back and go any distance out of the way than encounter those two handsome, dark, bright eyes.

One day, when Private Richard Doubledick came out of the Black Hole, where he had been passing the last eight and forty hours and in which retreat he spent a good deal of his time, he was ordered to be taken himself to Captain Taunton's quarters. In the state and squalid state of a man just out of the Black Hole, he had less fancy than ever for being seen by the captain, but he was not so mad yet as to disobey orders, and consequently went up to the terrace overlooking the parade ground, where the officers' quarters were, twisting and breaking in his hands as he went along a bit of the straw that had formed the decorative furniture of the Black Hole.

"Come in!" cried the captain when he knocked with his knuckles at the door. Private Richard Doubledick pulled off his cap, took a step forward and felt very conscious that he stood in the light of the dark, bright eyes.

There was a slight pause. Private Richard Doubledick had put the straw in his mouth and was gradually doubling it up into his windpipe and choking himself.

"Doubledick," said the captain, "do you know where you are going to?"

"To the devil, sir," faltered Doubledick.

"Yes," returned the captain. "And very fast."

Private Richard Doubledick turned the straw of the Black Hole in his mouth and made a miserable salute of acquiescence.

"Doubledick," said the captain, "since

I entered his majesty's service, a boy of seventeen, I have been pained to see many men of promise going that road, but I have never been so pained to see a man determined to make the shameful journey as I have been, ever since you joined the regiment, to see you."

Private Richard Doubledick began to find a film stealing over the floor at which he looked, also to find the legs of the captain's breakfast table turning crooked, as if he saw them through water.

"I am only a common soldier, sir," said he. "It signifies very little what such a poor brute comes to."

"You are a man," returned the captain, with grave indignation, "of education and superior advantages, and if you say that, meaning what you say, you have sunk lower than I had believed. How low that must be I leave you to consider, knowing what I know of your disgrace and seeing what I see."

"I hope to get shot soon, sir," said Private Richard Doubledick, "and then the regiment and the world together will be rid of me."

The legs of the table were becoming very crooked. Doubledick, looking up to steady his vision, met the eyes that had so strong an influence over him. He put his hand before his own eyes, and the breast of his disgrace jacket swelled as if it would fly asunder.

"I would rather," said the young captain, "see this in you, Doubledick, than I would see 5,000 guineas counted out upon this table for a gift to my good mother. Have you a mother?"

"I am thankful to say she is dead, sir."

"If your praises," returned the captain, "were sounded from mouth to mouth through the whole regiment, through the whole army, through the whole country, you would wish she had lived to say, with pride and joy, 'He is my son!'"

"Spare me, sir," said Doubledick. "She would never have heard any good of me. She would never have had any pride and joy in owning herself my mother. Love and compassion she might have had, and would have always had, I know, but not—spare me, sir! I am a broken wretch, quite at your mercy!" And he turned his face to the wall and stretched out his imploring hand.

"My friend"—began the captain. "God bless you, sir!" sobbed Private Richard Doubledick.

"You are at the crisis of your fate. Hold your course unchanged a little longer and you know what must happen. I know even better than you can imagine that, after that has happened, you are lost. No man who could shed those tears could bear those marks."

"I fully believe it, sir," in a low, shivering voice said Private Richard Doubledick.

"But a man in any station can do his duty," said the young captain, "and in doing it can earn his own respect even if his case should be so very unfortunate and so very rare that he can earn no other man's. A common soldier, poor brute though you called him just now, has this advantage in the stormy times we live in, that he always does his duty before a host of sympathizing witnesses. Do you doubt that he may do it as to be extolled through a whole regiment, through a whole army, through a whole country? Turn while you may yet retrieve the past and try."

"I will. I ask for only one witness, sir," cried Richard, with a bursting heart.

"I understand you. I will be a watchful and a faithful one."

I have heard from Private Richard Doubledick's own lips that he dropped down upon his knees, kissed that officer's hand, arose and went out of the light of the dark, bright eyes an altered man.

In that year, 1799, the French were in Egypt, in Italy, in Germany—where not? Napoleon Bonaparte had likewise begun to stir against us in India, and most men could read the signs of the great troubles that were coming on. In the very next year, when we formed an alliance with Austria against him, Captain Taunton's regiment was on service in India. And there was not a French noncommissioned officer in it—no, nor in the whole line—than Corporal Richard Doubledick.

In 1801 the Indian army were on the coast of Egypt. Next year was the year of the proclamation of the short peace, and they were recalled. It had then become well known to thousands of men that wherever Captain Taun-

ton, with the dark, bright eyes, led there, close to him, ever at his side, firm as a rock, true as the sun and brave as Mars, would be certain to be found while life beats in their hearts that famous soldier, Sergeant Richard Doubledick.

Eighteen hundred and five, besides being the great year of Trafalgar, was a year of hard fighting in India. That year saw such wonders done by a sergeant major who cut his way straight through a solid mass of men, recovered the colors of his regiment, which had been seized from the hand of a poor boy shot through the heart, and rescued his wounded captain, who was down and in a very jungle of horses' hoofs and sabers—saw such wonders done, I say, by this brave sergeant major that he was specially made the bearer of the colors he had won, and Ensign Richard Doubledick had risen from the ranks.

Sorely cut up in every battle, but always re-enforced by the bravest of men—for the fame of following the old colors, shot through and through, which Ensign Richard Doubledick had saved, inspired all breasts—this regiment fought its way through the peninsula war up to the investment of Badajos in 1812. Again and again it had been cheered through the British ranks until the tears had sprung into men's eyes at the mere hearing of the mighty British voice so exultant in their valor, and there was not a drummer boy but knew the legend that wherever the dark, bright eyes, and Ensign Richard Doubledick, who was devoted to him, were seen to go, there the boldest spirits in the English army became wild to follow.

One day at Badajos—not in the great storming, but in repelling a hot rally of the besieged upon our men at work in the trenches, who had given way—the two officers found themselves running forward, face to face, against a party of French infantry, who made a stand. There was an officer at their head encouraging his men—a courageous, handsome, gallant officer of five and thirty, whom Doubledick saw hurriedly, almost momentarily, but saw well. He particularly noticed this officer waving his sword and rallying his men with an eager and excited cry when they fired in obedience to gesture and Major Taunton dropped.

It was over in ten minutes more and Doubledick returned to the spot where he had laid the best friend man ever had on a coat spread upon the wet clay. Major Taunton's uniform was opened at the breast and on his shirt were three little spots of blood.

"Dear Doubledick," said he, "I am dying."

"For the love of heaven, no!" exclaimed the other, kneeling down beside him and passing his arm round his neck to raise his head. "Taunton! My preserver, my guardian angel, my witness! Dearest, truest, kindest of human beings! Taunton! For God's sake!"

The bright, dark eyes—so very, very dark now in the pale face—smiled upon him, and the hand he had kissed thirteen years ago laid itself fondly on his breast.

"Write to my mother. You will see home again. Tell her how we became friends. It will comfort her, as it comforts me."

He spoke no more, but faintly signed for a moment towards his hair as it fluttered in the wind. The ensign understood him. He smiled again when he saw that, and gently turning his face over on the supporting arm as if for rest, died, with his hand upon the breast in which he had revived a soul.

No dry eye looked on Ensign Richard Doubledick that melancholy day. He buried his friend on the field and became a lone, bereaved man. Beyond his duty he appeared to have but two remaining cares in life—one, to preserve the little packet of hair he was to give Taunton's mother; the other, to encounter that French officer who had rallied the men under whose feet Taunton fell. A new legend now began to circulate among our troops, and it was that when he and the French officer came face to face once more there would be weeping in France.

The war went on, and through it went the exact picture of the French officer on the one side and the bodily reality upon the other, until the battle of Toulouse was fought. In the returns sent home appeared these words: "Severely wounded, but not dangerously. Lieutenant Richard Doubledick."

At midsummer time in the year 1814 Lieutenant Richard Doubledick, now a browned soldier seven and thirty years of age, came home to England inviolated. He brought the hair with him. Aear his heart. Many a French officer had he seen since that day; many a dreadful night, in searching with men and lanterns for his wounded, had he relieved French officers lying disabled, but the mental picture and the reality had never come together.

Though he was weak and suffered pain, he lost not an hour in getting down to France. In Somersetshire, where Taunton's mother lived, in the sweet, compassionate words that naturally present themselves to the mind tonight, "he was the only son of his mother, and she was a widow."

It was a Sunday evening, and the lady sat at her quiet garden window reading the Bible; reading to herself in a trembling voice that very passage in it, as I have heard him tell. He heard the words, "Young man, I say unto thee, arise!"

He had to pass the window, and the bright, dark eyes of his debased time seemed to look at him. Her heart told her who he was; she came to the door quickly and fell upon his neck.

"He saved me from ruin, made me a human creature, won me from infamy and shame. O God, forever bless him! As he will, he will!"

"He will!" the lady answered. "I know he is in heaven!" Then she piteously cried, "But, oh, my darling boy, my darling boy!"

Never from the hour when Private Richard Doubledick enlisted at Chatham had the private, corporal, sergeant, sergeant major, ensign or lieutenant breathed his right name, or the name of Mary Marshall, or a word of the story of his life, into any ear except his reclamer's.

But that night, remembering the words he had cherished for two years, "Tell her how we became friends. It will comfort her as it comforts me," he related everything. It gradually seemed to him as if in his maturity he had recovered a mother. It gradually seemed to her as if in her bereavement she had found a son. During his stay in England, the quiet garden into which he had slowly and painfully crept a stranger, became the boundary of his home. When he was able to join his regiment in the spring he left the garden thinking was this indeed the first time he had ever turned his face toward the old colors with a woman's blessing!

He followed them—so ragged, so scarred and pierced now, that they would scarcely hold together—to Quatre Bras and Ligny. He stood beside them in an awful stillness of many men, shadowy through the mist and drizzle of a wet June forenoon, on the field of Waterloo. And down to that hour the picture in his mind of the French officer had never been compared with the reality.

The famous regiment was in action early in the battle and received its first check in many an eventful year, when he was seen to fall. But it swept on to avenge him and left behind it no such creature in the world of consciousness as Lieutenant Richard Doubledick.

Through pits of mire and pools of rain, along deep ditches, once roads, that were pounded and ploughed to pieces by artillery, heavy wagons, tramp of men and horses and the struggle of every wheeled thing that could carry wounded soldiers; jolted among the dying and dead, so disfigured by blood and mud as to be hardly recognizable for humanity; undisturbed by the moaning of men and the shrieks of horses, which, newly taken from the peaceful pursuits of life, could not endure the sight of the stragglers lying by the wayside, never to resume their toilsome journey; dead as to any sentiment life that was in it, and yet alive—the form that had been Lieutenant Richard Doubledick, with whose praises England rang, was conveyed to Brussels. There it was tenderly laid down in hospital, and there it lay, weak after a march through the long bright summer days, until the harvest, spared by war, had ripened and was gathered in.

know he is in heaven!" Then she piteously cried, "But, oh, my darling boy, my darling boy!"

Never from the hour when Private Richard Doubledick enlisted at Chatham had the private, corporal, sergeant, sergeant major, ensign or lieutenant breathed his right name, or the name of Mary Marshall, or a word of the story of his life, into any ear except his reclamer's.

But that night, remembering the words he had cherished for two years, "Tell her how we became friends. It will comfort her as it comforts me," he related everything. It gradually seemed to him as if in his maturity he had recovered a mother. It gradually seemed to her as if in her bereavement she had found a son. During his stay in England, the quiet garden into which he had slowly and painfully crept a stranger, became the boundary of his home. When he was able to join his regiment in the spring he left the garden thinking was this indeed the first time he had ever turned his face toward the old colors with a woman's blessing!

He followed them—so ragged, so scarred and pierced now, that they would scarcely hold together—to Quatre Bras and Ligny. He stood beside them in an awful stillness of many men, shadowy through the mist and drizzle of a wet June forenoon, on the field of Waterloo. And down to that hour the picture in his mind of the French officer had never been compared with the reality.

The famous regiment was in action early in the battle and received its first check in many an eventful year, when he was seen to fall. But it swept on to avenge him and left behind it no such creature in the world of consciousness as Lieutenant Richard Doubledick.

Through pits of mire and pools of rain, along deep ditches, once roads, that were pounded and ploughed to pieces by artillery, heavy wagons, tramp of men and horses and the struggle of every wheeled thing that could carry wounded soldiers; jolted among the dying and dead, so disfigured by blood and mud as to be hardly recognizable for humanity; undisturbed by the moaning of men and the shrieks of horses, which, newly taken from the peaceful pursuits of life, could not endure the sight of the stragglers lying by the wayside, never to resume their toilsome journey; dead as to any sentiment life that was in it, and yet alive—the form that had been Lieutenant Richard Doubledick, with whose praises England rang, was conveyed to Brussels. There it was tenderly laid down in hospital, and there it lay, weak after a march through the long bright summer days, until the harvest, spared by war, had ripened and was gathered in.

Through pits of mire and pools of rain, along deep ditches, once roads, that were pounded and ploughed to pieces by artillery, heavy wagons, tramp of men and horses and the struggle of every wheeled thing that could carry wounded soldiers; jolted among the dying and dead, so disfigured by blood and mud as to be hardly recognizable for humanity; undisturbed by the moaning of men and the shrieks of horses, which, newly taken from the peaceful pursuits of life, could not endure the sight of the stragglers lying by the wayside, never to resume their toilsome journey; dead as to any sentiment life that was in it, and yet alive—the form that had been Lieutenant Richard Doubledick, with whose praises England rang, was conveyed to Brussels. There it was tenderly laid down in hospital, and there it lay, weak after a march through the long bright summer days, until the harvest, spared by war, had ripened and was gathered in.

Through pits of mire and pools of rain, along deep ditches, once roads, that were pounded and ploughed to pieces by artillery, heavy wagons, tramp of men and horses and the struggle of every wheeled thing that could carry wounded soldiers; jolted among the dying and dead, so disfigured by blood and mud as to be hardly recognizable for humanity; undisturbed by the moaning of men and the shrieks of horses, which, newly taken from the peaceful pursuits of life, could not endure the sight of the stragglers lying by the wayside, never to resume their toilsome journey; dead as to any sentiment life that was in it, and yet alive—the form that had been Lieutenant Richard Doubledick, with whose praises England rang, was conveyed to Brussels. There it was tenderly laid down in hospital, and there it lay, weak after a march through the long bright summer days, until the harvest, spared by war, had ripened and was gathered in.

Through pits of mire and pools of rain, along deep ditches, once roads, that were pounded and ploughed to pieces by artillery, heavy wagons, tramp of men and horses and the struggle of every wheeled thing that could carry wounded soldiers; jolted among the dying and dead, so disfigured by blood and mud as to be hardly recognizable for humanity; undisturbed by the moaning of men and the shrieks of horses, which, newly taken from the peaceful pursuits of life, could not endure the sight of the stragglers lying by the wayside, never to resume their toilsome journey; dead as to any sentiment life that was in it, and yet alive—the form that had been Lieutenant Richard Doubledick, with whose praises England rang, was conveyed to Brussels. There it was tenderly laid down in hospital, and there it lay, weak after a march through the long bright summer days, until the harvest, spared by war, had ripened and was gathered in.

Through pits of mire and pools of rain, along deep ditches, once roads, that were pounded and ploughed to pieces by artillery, heavy wagons, tramp of men and horses and the struggle of every wheeled thing that could carry wounded soldiers; jolted among the dying and dead, so disfigured by blood and mud as to be hardly recognizable for humanity; undisturbed by the moaning of men and the shrieks of horses, which, newly taken from the peaceful pursuits of life, could not endure the sight of the stragglers lying by the wayside, never to resume their toilsome journey; dead as to any sentiment life that was in it, and yet alive—the form that had been Lieutenant Richard Doubledick, with whose praises England rang, was conveyed to Brussels. There it was tenderly laid down in hospital, and there it lay, weak after a march through the long bright summer days, until the harvest, spared by war, had ripened and was gathered in.

Through pits of mire and pools of rain, along deep ditches, once roads, that were pounded and ploughed to pieces by artillery, heavy wagons, tramp of men and horses and the struggle of every wheeled thing that could carry wounded soldiers; jolted among the dying and dead, so disfigured by blood and mud as to be hardly recognizable for humanity; undisturbed by the moaning of men and the shrieks of horses, which, newly taken from the peaceful pursuits of life, could not endure the sight of the stragglers lying by the wayside, never to resume their toilsome journey; dead as to any sentiment life that was in it, and yet alive—the form that had been Lieutenant Richard Doubledick, with whose praises England rang, was conveyed to Brussels. There it was tenderly laid down in hospital, and there it lay, weak after a march through the long bright summer days, until the harvest, spared by war, had ripened and was gathered in.

Through pits of mire and pools of rain, along deep ditches, once roads, that were pounded and ploughed to pieces by artillery, heavy wagons, tramp of men and horses and the struggle of every wheeled thing that could carry wounded soldiers; jolted among the dying and dead, so disfigured by blood and mud as to be hardly recognizable for humanity; undisturbed by the moaning of men and the shrieks of horses, which, newly taken from the peaceful pursuits of life, could not endure the sight of the stragglers lying by the wayside, never to resume their toilsome journey; dead as to any sentiment life that was in it, and yet alive—the form that had been Lieutenant Richard Doubledick, with whose praises England rang, was conveyed to Brussels. There it was tenderly laid down in hospital, and there it lay, weak after a march through the long bright summer days, until the harvest, spared by war, had ripened and was gathered in.

Through pits of mire and pools of rain, along deep ditches, once roads, that were pounded and ploughed to pieces by artillery, heavy wagons, tramp of men and horses and the struggle of every wheeled thing that could carry wounded soldiers; jolted among the dying and dead, so disfigured by blood and mud as to be hardly recognizable for humanity; undisturbed by the moaning of men and the shrieks of horses, which, newly taken from the peaceful pursuits of life, could not endure the sight of the stragglers lying by the wayside, never to resume their toilsome journey; dead as to any sentiment life that was in it, and yet alive—the form that had been Lieutenant Richard Doubledick, with whose praises England rang, was conveyed to Brussels. There it was tenderly laid down in hospital, and there it lay, weak after a march through the long bright summer days, until the harvest, spared by war, had ripened and was gathered in.

Through pits of mire and pools of rain, along deep ditches, once roads, that were pounded and ploughed to pieces by artillery, heavy wagons, tramp of men and horses and the struggle of every wheeled thing that could carry wounded soldiers; jolted among the dying and dead, so disfigured by blood and mud as to be hardly recognizable for humanity; undisturbed by the moaning of men and the shrieks of horses, which, newly taken from the peaceful pursuits of life, could not endure the sight of the stragglers lying by the wayside, never to resume their toilsome journey; dead as to any sentiment life that was in it, and yet alive—the form that had been Lieutenant Richard Doubledick, with whose praises England rang, was conveyed to Brussels. There it was tenderly laid down in hospital, and there it lay, weak after a march through the long bright summer days, until the harvest, spared by war, had ripened and was gathered in.

Through pits of mire and pools of rain, along deep ditches, once roads, that were pounded and ploughed to pieces by artillery, heavy wagons, tramp of men and horses and the struggle of every wheeled thing that could carry wounded soldiers; jolted among the dying and dead, so disfigured by blood and mud as to be hardly recognizable for humanity; undisturbed by the moaning of men and the shrieks of horses, which, newly taken from the peaceful pursuits of life, could not endure the sight of the stragglers lying by the wayside, never to resume their toilsome journey; dead as to any sentiment life that was in it, and yet alive—the form that had been Lieutenant Richard Doubledick, with whose praises England rang, was conveyed to Brussels. There it was tenderly laid down in hospital, and there it lay, weak after a march through the long bright summer days, until the harvest, spared by war, had ripened and was gathered in.

Through pits of mire and pools of rain, along deep ditches, once roads, that were pounded and ploughed to pieces by artillery, heavy wagons, tramp of men and horses and the struggle of every wheeled thing that could carry wounded soldiers; jolted among the dying and dead, so disfigured by blood and mud as to be hardly recognizable for humanity; undisturbed by the moaning of men and the shrieks of horses, which, newly taken from the peaceful pursuits of life, could not endure the sight of the stragglers lying by the wayside, never to resume their toilsome journey; dead as to any sentiment life that was in it, and yet alive—the form that had been Lieutenant Richard Doubledick, with whose praises England rang, was conveyed to Brussels. There it was tenderly laid down in hospital, and there it lay, weak after a march through the long bright summer days, until the harvest, spared by war, had ripened and was gathered in.

Through pits of mire and pools of rain, along deep ditches, once roads, that were pounded and ploughed to pieces by artillery, heavy wagons, tramp of men and horses and the struggle of every wheeled thing that could carry wounded soldiers; jolted among the dying and dead, so disfigured by blood and mud as to be hardly recognizable for humanity; undisturbed by the moaning of men and the shrieks of horses, which, newly taken from the peaceful pursuits of life, could not endure the sight of the stragglers lying by the wayside, never to resume their toilsome journey; dead as to any sentiment life that was in it, and yet alive—the form that had been Lieutenant Richard Doubledick, with whose praises England rang, was conveyed to Brussels. There it was tenderly laid down in hospital, and there it lay, weak after a march through the long bright summer days, until the harvest, spared by war, had ripened and was gathered in.

Through pits of mire and pools of rain, along deep ditches, once roads, that were pounded and ploughed to pieces by artillery, heavy wagons, tramp of men and horses and the struggle of every wheeled thing that could carry wounded soldiers; jolted among the dying and dead, so disfigured by blood and mud as to be hardly recognizable for humanity; undisturbed by the moaning of men and the shrieks of horses, which, newly taken from the peaceful pursuits of life, could not endure the sight of the stragglers lying by the wayside, never to resume their toilsome journey; dead as to any sentiment life that was in it, and yet alive—the form that had been Lieutenant Richard Doubledick, with whose praises England rang, was conveyed to Brussels. There it was tenderly laid down in hospital, and there it lay, weak after a march through the long bright summer days, until the harvest, spared by war, had ripened and was gathered in.

Through pits of mire and pools of rain, along deep ditches, once roads, that were pounded and ploughed to pieces by artillery, heavy wagons, tramp of men and horses and the struggle of every wheeled thing that could carry wounded soldiers; jolted among the dying and dead, so disfigured by blood and mud as to be hardly recognizable for humanity; undisturbed by the moaning of men and the shrieks of horses, which, newly taken from the peaceful pursuits of life, could not endure the sight of the stragglers lying by the wayside, never to resume their toilsome journey; dead as to any sentiment life that was in it, and yet alive—the form that had been Lieutenant Richard Doubledick, with whose praises England rang, was conveyed to Brussels. There it was tenderly laid down in hospital, and there it lay, weak after a march through the long bright summer days, until the harvest, spared by war, had ripened and was gathered in.

Through pits of mire and pools of rain, along deep ditches, once roads, that were pounded and ploughed to pieces by artillery, heavy wagons, tramp of men and horses and the struggle of every wheeled thing that could carry wounded soldiers; jolted among the dying and dead, so disfigured by blood and mud as to be hardly recognizable for humanity; undisturbed by the moaning of men and the shrieks of horses, which, newly taken from the peaceful pursuits of life, could not endure the sight of the stragglers lying by the wayside, never to resume their toilsome journey; dead as to any sentiment life that was in it, and yet alive—the form that had been Lieutenant Richard Doubledick, with whose praises England rang, was conveyed to Brussels. There it was tenderly laid down in hospital, and there it lay, weak after a march through the long bright summer days, until the harvest, spared by war, had ripened and was gathered in.

Through pits of mire and pools of rain, along deep ditches, once roads, that were pounded and ploughed to pieces by artillery, heavy wagons, tramp of men and horses and the struggle of every wheeled thing that could carry wounded soldiers; jolted among the dying and dead, so disfigured by blood and mud as to be hardly recognizable for humanity; undisturbed by the moaning of men and the shrieks of horses, which, newly taken from the peaceful pursuits of life, could not endure the sight of the stragglers lying by the wayside, never to resume their toilsome journey; dead as to any sentiment life that was in it, and yet alive—the form that had been Lieutenant Richard Doubledick, with whose praises England rang, was conveyed to Brussels. There it was tenderly laid down in hospital, and there it lay, weak after a march through the long bright summer days, until the harvest, spared by war, had ripened and was gathered in.

Through pits of mire and pools of rain, along deep ditches, once roads, that were pounded and ploughed to pieces by artillery, heavy wagons, tramp of men and horses and the struggle of every wheeled thing that could carry wounded soldiers; jolted among the dying and dead, so disfigured by blood and mud as to be hardly recognizable for humanity; undisturbed by the moaning of men and the shrieks of horses, which, newly taken from the peaceful pursuits of life, could not endure the sight of the stragglers lying by the wayside, never to resume their toilsome journey; dead as to any sentiment life that was in it, and yet alive—the form that had been Lieutenant Richard Doubledick, with whose praises England rang, was conveyed to Brussels. There it was tenderly laid down in hospital, and there it lay, weak after a march through the long bright summer days, until the harvest, spared by war, had ripened and was gathered in.

Through pits of mire and pools of rain, along deep ditches, once roads, that were pounded and ploughed to pieces by artillery, heavy wagons, tramp of men and horses and the struggle of every wheeled thing that could carry wounded soldiers; jolted among the dying and dead, so disfigured by blood and mud as to be hardly recognizable for humanity; undisturbed by the moaning of men and the shrieks of horses, which, newly taken from the peaceful pursuits of life, could not endure the sight of the stragglers lying by the wayside, never to resume their toilsome journey; dead as to any sentiment life that was in it, and yet alive—the form that had been Lieutenant Richard Doubledick, with whose praises England rang, was conveyed to Brussels. There it was tenderly laid down in hospital, and there it lay, weak after a march through the long bright summer days, until the harvest, spared by war, had ripened and was gathered in.

Through pits of mire and pools of rain, along deep ditches, once roads, that were pounded and ploughed to pieces by artillery, heavy wagons, tramp of men and horses and the struggle of every wheeled thing that could carry wounded soldiers; jolted among the dying and dead, so disfigured by blood and mud as to be hardly recognizable for humanity; undisturbed by the moaning of men and the shrieks of horses, which, newly taken from the peaceful pursuits of life, could not endure the sight of the stragglers lying by the wayside, never to resume their toilsome journey; dead as to any sentiment life that was in it, and yet alive—the form that had been Lieutenant Richard Doubledick, with whose praises England rang, was conveyed to Brussels. There it was tenderly laid down in hospital, and there it lay, weak after a march through the long bright summer days, until the harvest, spared by war, had ripened and was gathered in.

Through pits of mire and pools of rain, along deep ditches, once roads, that were pounded and ploughed to pieces by artillery, heavy wagons, tramp of men and horses and the struggle of every wheeled thing that could carry wounded soldiers; jolted among the dying and dead, so disfigured by blood and mud as to be hardly recognizable for humanity; undisturbed by the moaning of men and the shrieks of horses, which, newly taken from the peaceful pursuits of life, could not endure the sight of the stragglers lying by the wayside, never to resume their toilsome journey; dead as to any sentiment life that was in it, and yet alive—the form that had been Lieutenant Richard Doubledick, with whose praises England rang, was conveyed to Brussels. There it was tenderly laid down in hospital, and there it lay, weak after a march through the long bright summer days, until the harvest, spared by war, had ripened and was gathered in.

Through pits of mire and pools of rain, along deep ditches, once roads, that were pounded and ploughed to pieces by artillery, heavy wagons, tramp of men and horses and the struggle of every wheeled thing that could carry wounded soldiers; jolted among the dying and dead, so disfigured by blood and mud as to be hardly recognizable for humanity; undisturbed by the moaning of men and the shrieks of horses, which, newly taken from the peaceful pursuits of life, could not endure the sight of the stragglers lying by the wayside, never to resume their toilsome journey; dead as to any sentiment life that was in it, and yet alive—the form that had been Lieutenant Richard Doubledick, with whose praises England rang, was conveyed to Brussels. There it was tenderly laid down in hospital, and there it lay, weak after a march through the long bright summer days, until the harvest, spared by war, had ripened and was gathered in.

Through pits of mire and pools of rain, along deep ditches, once roads, that were pounded and ploughed to pieces by artillery, heavy wagons, tramp of men and horses and the struggle of every wheeled thing that could carry wounded soldiers; jolted among the dying and dead, so disfigured by blood and mud as to be hardly recognizable for humanity; undisturbed by the moaning of men and the shrieks of horses, which, newly taken from the peaceful pursuits of life, could not endure the sight of the stragglers lying by the wayside, never to resume their toilsome journey; dead as to any sentiment life that was in it, and yet alive—the form that had been Lieutenant Richard Doubledick, with whose praises England rang, was conveyed to Brussels. There it was tenderly laid down in hospital, and there it lay, weak after a march through the long bright summer days, until the harvest, spared by war, had ripened and was gathered in.

Through pits of mire and pools of rain, along deep ditches, once roads, that were pounded and ploughed to pieces by artillery, heavy wagons, tramp of men and horses and the struggle of every wheeled thing that could carry wounded soldiers; jolted among the dying and dead, so disfigured by blood and mud as to be hardly recognizable for humanity; undisturbed by the moaning of men and the shrieks of horses, which, newly taken from the peaceful pursuits of life, could not endure the sight of the stragglers lying by the wayside, never to resume their toilsome journey; dead as to any sentiment life that was in it, and yet alive—the form that had been Lieutenant Richard Doubledick, with whose praises England rang, was conveyed to Brussels. There it was tenderly laid down in hospital, and there it lay, weak after a march through the long bright summer days, until the harvest, spared by war, had ripened and was gathered in.

Through pits of mire and pools of rain, along deep ditches, once roads, that were pounded and ploughed to pieces by artillery, heavy wagons, tramp of men and horses and the struggle of every wheeled thing that could carry wounded soldiers